

MEMORANDUM

Engineering Division



To: Honorable Mayor and City Council
Through: Facilities Naming Subcommittee
From: Mark Rogge, CIP Manager
Subject: **Recommendations From the Facilities Naming Subcommittee**
Date: August 16, 2005

BACKGROUND

The Facilities Naming Subcommittee met on Monday, August 1, 2005 to discuss several items referred to the Subcommittee by the City Council. The agenda included review of the name for the new Library, the name of the new Senior Housing Project and ways of honoring the following people: Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Cesar Chavez, former City Councilmember Barbara Lee, and former Sunnyhills Neighborhood president Neil McKenzie.

Recommendations:

1. Name the new Library, "Milpitas Community Library" or "The Milpitas Public Library".
2. Honor Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., by naming a specific room in the new Library for him.
3. Name the New Senior Center for Barbara Lee.
4. Name the Senior Housing Development on North Main Street (across the street from the new Library), DeVries Place.
5. Honor Cesar Chavez with a City Holiday, direct staff to consider negotiation with labor groups on upcoming contracts. Perhaps, consider exchanging for another holiday or include as part of an overall labor contract. Meanwhile, recognize Cesar Chavez on March 31 (Cesar Chavez Day) with educational activities.
6. The Committee directed staff to talk to Neil Mackenzie's family and the Sunnyhills Neighborhood Association and receive a recommendation from the Sunnyhills Neighborhood Association.

Meeting Notes
Monday, August 1, 2005

not always agree with everybody's opinions in the City. Sometimes he does agree other times he doesn't.

- Margie Stephens - Fifty years ago Milpitas became its own City to avoid being incorporated by San Jose; and if we have a Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Library I am afraid it will appear as a San Jose wannabe, since it's the name that they have. It will also cause great confusion between the two cities.
- Steve Munzel, Chairman from PRCRC felt that the new library is a historical site and it was unanimous on the PRCRC commission that the people in Milpitas should have something named after them. The PRCRC felt that naming the library "Milpitas Community Library" was appropriate because the people of Milpitas live here. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. didn't visit Milpitas. Cesar Chavez went through here once in a train but he didn't stop. PRCRC just felt that it was important to have relevance in a name; otherwise a name is meaningless to a community and to its children. There are a lot of great things out there about Martin Luther King, Jr. all over America. We have days off, national holidays for Martin Luther King. "Cesar Chavez Day" in California that should become a school holiday in this district. I thought about that for 4 years when I was on the school board and to replace Cinco de Mayo. I still think that is an appropriate way to honor Cesar Chavez especially with the school children; but I don't think that renaming the Community Library is right. Taking the honorable name of "Milpitas Community Library" and changing into the name of someone who has never been here and has never contributed directly to this community is wrong and very unpopular," said Steve Munzel.
- The subcommittee asked for comments on the other agenda items.
- Mark Rogge introduced Mara Blitzer from Mid-Peninsula Senior Housing Coalition and stated she is available to answer any questions, about the Senior Housing project.
- Denny Weisgerber asked for clarification on naming a facility for Barbara Lee and for Neil MacKenzie. On the DeVries Property, it would be a strong suggestion that it would be DeVries Court or DeVries Place to honor that family for that historical place.
- Vice-Mayor Gomez - Just so the committee can know there was a request from Barbara Lee's family in the form of an email, so I apologize for not bringing that to you. Their request was if the committee considers naming anything that we take into account her dedication to seniors and they recommended that some sort of senior facilities or something be named after her family.
- Denny Weisgerber – There will be rooms in the Senior Housing that could be named for Barbara Lee.
- Mara Blitzer – There is a Community Room that could be named.
- Mark Rogge stated we did receive a phone call and there was a citizen who wanted to talk about naming the new Senior Center but we did not get much information.
- Steve Munzel stated that he liked what Denny said regarding the DeVries Family; but he thinks it is also important that we acknowledge Dr. Renselaer J. Smith who built the house and whose family occupied

Recommendation to Honor former City Councilmember, Barbara Lee, Sunnyhills Neighborhood President, Neil MacKenzie, and suggested names for the Senior Housing Development on North Main Street

the house for about 40 years before the DeVries Family brought it in the late 40's. Usually if there is a historic building like this, a historic home, like the Rengstorff house for example, it is named after the builder and not after someone who subsequently lived in the house; but that is not always the case. So he hopes we have something there that calls attention to the history of Milpitas specifically to Dr. Renselaer J. Smith who was the second doctor in Milpitas.

- Mara Blitzter stated that one of the reasons why Mid-Peninsula didn't consider that their recommendations is that particular name, is difficult to spell. The Smith residence will be a little bit more difficult to remember than a different name. So we felt the DeVries was a stronger name and that is why The Mid-Peninsula choose it.
- Juniel Butler - I would like to make my comment on naming of the new library for Dr. Martin Luther King. I at this point would like the library to remain as "The Milpitas Library" and I think it will be much more appropriate a memorial that he is truly recognized worldwide and I am getting this real sense here that they don't want to recognize him in Milpitas by naming anything after him in Milpitas in this way. However, he is recognized worldwide so his name is on many things not necessarily just for things in the U.S. but abroad as I have described many times and his statue as well. So my recommendation would be to continue with the name of "Milpitas City Library" and then have a room set aside for Martin Luther King because he was very important.
- Steve Munzel stated that under agenda section B3e – Other names. I like what you are doing. I like that you are looking for people who are dead instead of people who are alive and in office and naming things after I think that is more suitable. I hope that we will have some place to have named after some of our Mayor, especially our first Mayor. I think it is appropriate to start thinking in that direction. Do we want to take someone who is the founder of our City and sometime in the distant/future we name something for him here in the city that would be important and relevant.
- Councilmember Livengood – We can add that to our agenda.
- Carmen Montano stated that her understanding is that the Sunnyhills Association would like to have the new Hetch-Hetchy Trail named after Neil MacKenzie.
- Councilmember Livengood – Has the Sunnyhills Association sent a letter in that regard? I would like to get an official statements from them on what they think would be appropriate since he was so close to that organization. Having something in writing from them of what they think is appropriate. We can handle that now and say that we will push that one off until we receive that letter. Contact the family. Then bring that back to the Subcommittee before we take action. It would be good to have that in writing so we know that is the direction we should go.
- Carmen Montano stated that she concurs with Butler to maintain the name "Milpitas Library" because it also preserves aspects of native names in Milpitas

- Councilmember Livengood stated; it is now up to the subcommittee to make recommendations. I would like to give you my recommendations having heard these comments and give Vice Mayor Gomez a chance to give his sense. We really need to look at a City Holiday for honoring Cesar Chavez. The issue for me is a cost cutting mode. I would support it as a holiday.
- Councilmember Livengood recommends honoring Cesar Chavez with a City Holiday. However, Councilmember Livengood directed staff to first brings it to the employees for labor union negotiation. There are a few unions up for contract negotiation and Councilmember Livengood wants to see Cesar Chavez holiday be worked into the contract.
- Vice Mayor Gomez asked when you mention go talk to the employee group/work with them, do you mean switching one holiday with another? Or just creating a whole new holiday?
- Councilmember Livengood stated that it could be either one. If it is a switch, then there is not a cost to the City. If it is an additional holiday then when we negotiate with our groups there will be a way of recouping some cost through the contract negotiation.
- Councilmember Livengood – I want a City Holiday for Cesar Chavez. We need to make it happen in the next few years. In the meantime, Council has already approval a Recognition Day on March 31 with education programming.
- Vice Mayor Gomez agreed with Councilmember Livengood's recommendation to honor Cesar Chavez with a City Holiday and agreed that until the holiday takes effect, Cesar Chavez will continue to have a Recognition Day on March 31.
- Mark Rogge – The Council has already set aside March 31 for Cesar Chavez Day. However, the educational activities have not yet been approved by the City Council.
- Councilmember Livengood – It needs to go back to Council. We need to identify what activities we will have, how it is going to manifest itself, and where it is going to be held. We need to consider the event for next year. This will gives us 8 months to prepare. The Council is not looking at a citywide event but something that the employees can be involved in until a City Holiday can take affect.
- Councilmember Livengood – The library should maintain the name "Milpitas Community Library". If we are going to honor Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. I think we should have a significant representation of his work and his contribution to our society to the world. My recommendation is to maintain the title that we have today and have a specific room named for him.
- Juniel Butler - The Dr. Martin Luther King Student Center has rooms named for people that were instrumental the Civil Rights Movement. (i.e. Rosa Parks, Mahatma Gandhi..)
- Denny Weisgerber stated there should be recognition for Dr. King. Have a nice room whether it is historical or a certain set of books in that room to honor Dr. King and to honor Barbara Lee.

- Carmen Montano asked, "Will there also be a Cesar Chavez room?"
- Councilmember Livengood stated that we have not even gotten to that point yet.
- Vice Mayor Gomez stated that he would like to pursue the holiday first.
- Councilmember Livengood agreed with Vice Mayor Gomez. The library will not be ready for another 4 years therefore we will have time to decide how we are going to use the interior to recognize influential people.
- Councilmember Livengood would like the DeVries name carry on. His recommendation is to name it DeVries Place and not DeVries Court since it sounds too much like a street name. Vice Mayor Gomez felt that either name would be fine with him.
- The Committee recommends that the Senior Housing Development on North Main Street be named the DeVries Place.
- Councilmember Livengood – We are building both the Senior Housing and Senior Center. I recommend that the Senior Center be named for Barbara Lee. (i.e., The Barbara Lee Milpitas Senior Center or the Milpitas Barbara Lee Senior Center).
- Vice Mayor Gomez agreed with Councilmember Livengood. However, it first needs to go before Council for approval.
- Carmen Montano -What was the process on naming the streets after individuals?
- The developer submits the names to the Planning Commission and it is the City that approves the street names. Vice Mayor Gomez stated that this is for new names. Renaming existing streets would require a new policy.
- Councilmember Livengood stated that we could look over the Naming Policy at the next Naming Facilities Subcommittee.
- Councilmember Livengood asked staff to talk to the Neil Mackenzie's family and the Sunnyhills Neighborhood Association for a recommendation.
- The Committee decided not to set another specific meeting time but agreed to meet sometime in September.
- Adjourned: 6:40 pm